22 1950

Alabama

Hotel Jim Crow Causes Jury Dismissal Nightly in Case

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (ANP)—A jury serving in a Federal trial in one of the most important cases in the district this year was dismissed two nights in a row because it had a colored member. Although it is the usual policy in cases of this kind to keep the jury together overnight, this was not possible in the case of two Montgomery ex-policemen charged with battering a citizen with their fists, a stick, a blackjack, and a brick.

All of Montgomery's chief hotels refused to accommodate the jury because of its colored member, Arther Doster, a farmer of Newton, Ala., according to U.S. Marshal Ben Ellis.

Contending that in "a case of this importance and interest" it was best to keep the jury together, Prosecutors Ben Brooks and Hartwell Davis had requested that jury would not be dismissed overnight. Jim crow overruled their request. The case was tried at a U.S. District Court before Judge C. B. Kennamer.

Alabama Prejudice Stymies U. S. Jury

MONTGOMERY, Ala.—(ANP)—A jury serving in a Federal trial in one of the most important cases in the district this year was dismissed two nights in a row because it had a Negro member.

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22 1950

Florida

On Florida Jury

One of the first to serve on the jury in Duval County Criminal Court in Jacksonville was F. Henry Williams, real estate broker and secretary of the National Association of Real Estate Brokers. Also on the jury with Mr. Williams and ten whites was George W. Powell, another real estate broker.

TWO AUBURN BUSINESSMEN ON JURY LIST

Two Negro businessmen were listed by the Fulton County Jury Commissioners to appear for service during the January-February grand jury term, according to the Fulton County Daily Report.

They are W. C. Thomas, of 178 Fort Street, N. E., an actuary for the Atlanta Life Insurance Co., and B. F. Cofer, of 99 Bradley St., N. E., an accountant with the J. B. Blayton firm and executive of the B. F. Cofer Real Estate and Insurance Company.

Judge Jesse Wood, of the superior court's criminal division, has been chosen to swear the men in for the two-month term along with 21 white jurors.

The retiring November-December grand jury had one Negro member, Rial L. Cash, 435 Auburn Avenue, N. E.

Three Negroes Serve On Fulton County Grand Jury

With three Negroes serving on the 23-man Fulton County Grand Jury, a Negro and white man were indicted on a charge of manufacturing whiskey without licenses.

The Negro jurors are L. C. Knox, Paul King and L. G. Lockhart.

Indicted on the whiskey charge were J. T. Heard and DeWitt Petty, white, according to the true bill returned by the jurors.

The charge grew out of an arrest report made on March 6. The indictment alleged the men operated a distillery, "The Godby Place," near the old National highway.

FIRST IN FULTON ANNALS

Jury's Only Negro Chosen as Foreman

Spectators in Fulton County Court leaned forward in their seats yesterday as Jury Foreman Hugo A. Sayles stepped forward to read the verdict in a forgery trial.

Not that a forgery trial usually commands such attention, there are several similar cases every week. Attention was focused on the foreman as well as on the defendant.

Sayles was the first Negro ever selected as a Fulton County jury foreman by an otherwise all-white jury, according to court officials.

And Defendant Charles Echols was also a Negro.

The defendant was charged with breaking into the home of Mrs. Maude Long, 171 Euharlee St., S. W., stealing a bank pass book and a wrist watch and later using the book on several occasions to draw a total of $200 from her account.

Mrs. Long was the only witness.

Sayles, an interior decorator of 40 Jeptha St., S. W., read the verdict. It was guilty on two charges of forgery. Echols was sentenced to five to seven years on both counts.

11 White Jurors Choose Negro as Foreman

Atlanta, May 10 (AP)—Eleven white jurors yesterday chose a Negro as their foreman.

Attendants of Fulton County (Atlanta) Superior Court said Hugo A. Sayles was the first Negro ever selected here as a foreman of an otherwise-all-white jury.

The defendant, Charles Echols, also was a Negro. He was convicted on two counts of forgery and sentenced to five to seven years on each count.

Second Negro Heads Jury

ATLANTA, Ga.—Fulton Superior Court had its second Negro foreman of a jury last week when Graham W. Jackson, internationally famed musician served during the trial of Johnny Griggs. A few days ago, Hugo A. Sayles, served as a jury foreman in the Superior Court.

COVERING THE COURTS

First Negro Named Foreman Of Jury To Hear Criminal Offense

BY ROBERT E. JOHNSON

An Atlanta interior decorator Tuesday became the first Negro to serve as foreman of a criminal trial jury in Fulton Superior court, according to a veteran courthouse deputy clerk.

The petit juror, Hugo A. Sayles of 40 Jeptha Street, S. W., was elected by 11 white veniremen to serve as foreman of the 12-man jury impaneled to decide the fate of an Atlanta man indicted on two counts of forgery.

Deputy Clerk Charlie Hartsfield, who has served more than 20 years as a court official, said he couldn't recall any record of a Negro ever serving as foreman of a jury at a Fulton criminal arraignment.

The defendant, Charles Echols, was found guilty of two forgery charges and sentenced to serve 5-7 years on each count.

Assistant Solicitor Carl Copeland, state prosecutor read the indictment which alleged the defendant broke into the home of Mrs. Maude Law, of 171 Euhrlee Street, S. W., and pilfered a bank pass book and a wrist watch.

Mrs. Law testified that $200 had been drawn from her savings account on the bank book while allegedly in the possession of the defendant.

Echols was represented by Defense Attorney George T. Manley. He was not arraigned on the burglary charge.

Slaying "Justifiable"

A white College Park police officer yesterday was absolved of any suspicion of foul play in connection with the fatal shooting of a 26-year-old man when a Fulton coroner's jury ruled that the killing was "justifiable homicide."

The verdict was reached at an inquest which was held in Fulton County courthouse to inquire into the death of Little Robert Johnson, who was shot to death by Patrolman C .C. Smith last Sunday morning.

Smith testified that the victim, suspected in connection with an automobile larceny, hurled a hammer at him. He said he was giving chase to the suspect when the incident occurred.

ATLANTA PRECEDENT NEGRO HEADS JURY

Atlanta, Ga.-Fulton County last week had its first Negro jury foreman. Hugo A Sayles, interior decorator and union leader, was for eman of a panel in Fulton Superior Criminal Court which found Charles Echols, a Negro, guilty on two counts of forgery.

Courier
Sat. 5-20-50
Pittsburgh, Pa.

FIVE NEGROES SERVING AS PETIT JURORS

Five Negroes yesterday were serving as petit jurors in the criminal division of Fulton Superor Court, according to deputy courthouse records.

Two of the jurors were Auburn Avenue businessmen, Edward L. Simon, of the Atlanta Life Insurance Company, and T. D. Alexander, architect-contractor and real estate broker.

The other jurors were listed as Rev. W. C. Dorsey, a Methodist minister, George S. Stewart and Joseph Pickens.

An Atlanta Life Insurance company executive F. A. Toomer, is serving on the Fulton County Grand Jury for the November-December term. Ralph McGill, Atlanta Constitution editor is also serving on the grand jury panel with Toomer.

Georgia

Rev.J.A.Baxter
To Answer Call
For Federal Jury
Service.

When Federal Court opens here Monday morning, a veteran Negro juryman, the Rev.James A.Baxter will be on hand. Rev.Baxter, supt., of the Atlanta District in the Methodist Church, has accepted the call for jury service beginning Mon.Morning.Jan.16, when Judge M. Neil Andrews will preside.
The Rev.Mr.Baxter has served on several important cases, some involving suits upward of a million dollars during the days of Judge E.Marvin Underwood.

Atlata, Ga.
Daily World
Thurs. 1-12-50

Sole Colored Juror Acts as Foreman at Forgery Trial

ATLANTA (ANP) — Hugo A. Sayles, the only colored juror in the forgery trial of Charles Echols here last week, also was foreman for an otherwise all-white jury.

Echols was charged with breaking into the home of a white woman and stealing a wrist watch and a bank pass book and later using the book to take $200 out of her account. The jury foreman, an interior decorator, read the verdict of guilty on two charges of forgery. Echols was given five to seven years.

5 Negroes Called For Jury Service

May Hear Case Of Cab Driver Who Shot Dixon

Five Atlanta Negroes yesterday were placed on the petit jury list for service during the week of February 13, a Fulton Superior court clerk reported.

They are W. H. Scott Jr. 87 Stafford Street, S. W.; Henry J. Allen, 542 Highland Avenue, N. E.; Aaron Whitfield, 945 Frank Street, S. W.; William Carithers, 340 Ashby Street, N. W.; and Walter Weaver, 30 Bass Street, S. E.

According to the Superior court clerk, the five Atlantans will be impaneled in the Criminal Division of the Fulton county superior court.

Judge Jesse Mayes is presiding in the first division of the criminal court while Fulton Superior Court Judge Ralph Pharr presides in the second division of the criminal court.

The petit jurors will be sworn in for jury duty Monday morning.

Meanwhile, the superior court criminal docket shows that three important cases are slated during the week of February 13.

The criminal docket, published in the Fulton County Daily Report, shows that James Lawson, an Atlanta car-for-hire driver, faces arraignment February 13, charged with shooting Officer Claud Dixon. On February 15, William Browner Jr., charged with fatally wounding a Tate, Ga., school principal in an Auburn Avenue drugstore, face court arraignment. Mrs. Louise James,, charged with murder in connection with a double slaying on Jones Avenue, will be arraigned on February 16.

The Negro jurors will be available for jury service during the trial of each of the murder suspects docketed during the week.

World Editor Reports For Jury Service

Seven Other Negroes On Petit Jury

C. A. Scott, editor of the Atlanta Daily World, was sworn in as a Fulton petit juror Monday, thus proving his word as good as his World.

Early this month when he was notified by Fulton County Jury Commission that his name had been drawn for jury service he promised he would appear.

Summoned to serve on the petit jury of Fulton Superior Court criminal division — Editor Scott reported for service at 9 a. m. Monday morning. He was sworn in along with seven other Negroes who had been called to jury service for the week of February 20.

The names of the Negro jurors sworn in with the World editor are Pleas Butler, 1049 Coleman Street, S. W.; Rev. Clarence Walker, 510 Mary Street, S. W.; Frank Berry, 801 Frazier Street, S. E; M. S. Baldwin, 276 Griffin Street, S. W.; George H. Body, 166 Chapell Road, N. W.; and Lester West, 1103 McDaniel Street, S. W. The latter three were placed in panel six, the others in panel five.

All eight of the jurors were impaneled as trial jurors in Judge Ralph Pharr's court but were struck during jury selection by the defense.

The superior court judge then excused the jurors for the remainder of the day and ordered them to report for service today at 9:30 a. m.

The jurors drew strikes against them in the arraignment of a Negro, Johnny Lee Hill, charged with burglary. The defendant was then tried by an all-white jury. His case will continue today.

Graham Jackson Is Second Negro Foreman Of Jury

Graham Jackson, favorite musician of the late President F. D. Roosevelt, yesterday became the second race juror to serve as foreman of a 12-man trial in Fulton County Superior Court.

The famed radio artist served as head of a mixed jury which found an Atlanta man guilty of sodomy and recommended him to serve five years in penitentiary.

Johnny Griggs was arraigned before Judge E. E. Andrews charged with the offense of sodomy on May 16. The charge was brought against the defendant by Officers Ernest Lyons and J. D. Hudson.

They alleged Griggs was apprehended while committing an unnatural act "against the order of nature" with a man identified by the officers as Austin Morrow.

The jury, with Jackson serving as foreman and another race juror, Walter Wynn on the same panel deliberated shortly before reaching a verdict.

Previously, Hugo A. Sayles, an interior decorator, became the first member of his race to serve as jury foreman in Fulton courts.

NEGROES ACCEPTED ON ST. LANDRY JURY

(Special to The Times-Picayune)

Opelousas, La., May 9—For the first time in the history of St. Landry parish Negroes are serving on the grand jury. Two Negro men, Nick Joseph of Opelousas, a hotel porter, and Wardy Joubert of Washington, were accepted for jury service Monday morning when a new grand jury was empaneled.

Other members of the grand jury chosen Monday were John Durio of Sunset, Albert Hebert of Opelousas, James R. Nall of Krotz Springs, Joseph Lalonde of Leonville, H. H. Thomas of Rosa, Calmes J. Cox, foreman, of Opelousas, Nolan Savoie of Grand Coteau, W. L. Devalcourt of Sunset, Alton Olivier of Arnaudville, and Armond Deshotel of Washington.

Negroes Named To Two Juries In La. Town

WINNSBORO, La. — (ANP) — For the first time since Reconstruction Days, three Negroes were named to the Franklin Parish grand jury and one to the petit jury here last week in a meeting of the five-man jury commission.

Clerk of Court Jimmie R. Donnell, ex-officie member of the commission said that "several times during the Reconstruction period, Negroes served on these two bodies."

Considered significant is the fact that the most important case to come before the grand jury is that of Willie Addison, a 14-year-old Negro boy, arrested on Sept. 1, on a charge of slaying and robbing George A. Dixon, a 76-year-old white cattle buyer.

Members of the commission naming the Negroes to the grand and petit juries are C. Lee Richardson, N. T. Mock, T. C. Johnson, George K. Broadway, and Lee Woolridge.

The grand jury will serve six months of the criminal term of court commencing Oct. 16; the petit jury will serve during the fall term beginning Nov. 20.

Included in the 20-man grand jury were Sandy Blount, Jesse Ernest, Jr., and Jake Neal and Lester Bolden named a member of the 30-man petit jury.

3 Negroes Selected For Federal Petit Jury

The Federal court session which opens on January 23rd has three North Side petit jurymen. They were selected from a group of 35 to start the federal court term.

Called were Thomas W. Harvey, 1880 No. Peoria; Stuart Alexander Thompson, 210 No. Greenwood and Fred Thompson, Sr., 2611 No. Peoria.

The Messrs Thompsons are drug firm owner and realestateman respectively. Mr. Harvey is employed in the city. All are property owners and old residents of the city.

Negroes On Jury Which Refused To Indict

BY MARK HYMAN

WEST CHESTER — (ANP— A county grand jury which included two Negroes, returned with a verdict of "not to indict" in favor of the two Oxford, Pa., businessmen who refused service to Dr. Horace Mann Bond, president of Lincoln University and party, when the men went to a coffee shop for service and to the theatre to see a movie in Oxford.

The jury Monday did not recommend that the president and the students pay the usual grand jury fee.

The defendants in the case were the same ones who won out over a delegation of Lincoln men at a previous trial over the same violation of the Civil Rights law of 1939. They were Chris Vergis, owner of the coffee shop, and Joseph Cowl, owner-manager of the theatre.

Only one of the colored persons on the jury is known at present. She is Miss Thelma Spann who has been a resident of West Chester for 13 years. She is a native of North Carolina.

According to Dr. Bond, the case was "forcefully presented" by a state's assistant attorney general. The president remarked that the fee which was charged to the young students last January in a previous case was omitted.

This is the second time men from the university have taken Cowl and Vergis to the grand jury. And this is the second time a jury has failed to indict them.

On April 27 of this year, Dr. Bond, John A. Davis, professor of political science at the school, Peryton Gray, another faculty member and Jacques Wilmore, a student, went to the coffee shop owned by Vergis. Service was refused. When the party walked into the theatre, the show was stopped.

Gov. James H. Duff promised to intervene and Atty. T. McKean Chidsey, attorney general, was to have appointed a member of his staff to prosecute the matter. This was followed up Monday when a representative of the office presented the case.

What further steps would be taken were not revealed either by the president of the college or the others involved

Saves Negro From Chair

U. S. High Court Hits Exclusion Of Negroes From Grand Jury

WASHINGTON—Barring of Negroes from grand juries was rapped in a decision handed down recently by the U. S. Supreme Court. The high court, by a vote of seven to one, threw out the death sentence of a Texas Negro because it found that Negroes were excluded from the grand jury which indicted him.

Justice Stanley Reed, announcing the action, said jury commissioners in Dallas County had a duty to seek out prospective grand jurors without regard to race.

"They did not do so here, and the result has been racial discrimination," Justice Reed said as the court wiped out the murder conviction.

Lee Cassell, the Negro listed in the indictment, was sentenced to death for the slaying of a white watchman. The murder indictment, voided by the high court, was returned on Nov. 18. 1947.

Texas Proud Of Negro Juryman

HOUSTON . . (CNS) . . . Negro citizens of this Texas town are proud this week over the surprise appointment of Rev. A. J. Kemp as a Commissioner of the Harris County grand jury, becoming the first Negro to gain that position. Rev. Kemp is pastor of the Mary Olive Baptist Church.

Criminal District Judge Langston King, in naming Rev. Kemp, broke a long precedent which had heretofore allowed only one Negro to serve on the jury. Rev. Kemp will be associated with two white men in naming the grand jury. Two other commissioners, Kern Tips, a radio announcer, and F. B. Bayer, combined with Rev. Kemp in naming three Negroes as members of the 16 man panel from which the 12 man grand jury for August will be named August 7th.

On the appointment, Judge King cited a recent U. S. Supreme Court decision "strengthened my intention" to take the action. That decision threw out a death penalty case appealed from Dallas on the grounds that Dallas County, too, followed the "one Negro and only one" policy on the grand jury

3 Negroes Named To Grand Jury

HOUSTON — A record of more than half a century old was shattered Monday when not one, but three Negroes were named on the Harris County Grand jury for the August term.

Meeting for a brief while Monday before closing for the August vacation, the new grand jury returned one indictment or theft. They will be subject to call in the intrim which is up to September 6. All three Negroes are well known in the city. Elbert D. Terry of 4204 Stassen is a grocer in the Sunny Side Addition. John W. Hicks is a retired letter carrier of 1915 Davis and a former school teacher. The Rev. C. T. Lee, 2009 Pannell is paston of the Progressive Mt. Herman Baptist church.

The men were sworn in by Judge Langston King and the three-man commission which appointed them had one Negro serving with them. A Negro on a grand jury commission in Harris County was also unheard of since reconstruction days until the last two commissions which had one Negro serving each time.

Court House offcials noted that it is the first time in the history of the County since reconstruction that there has been a departure from the previous custom of naming only one Negro to serve on the grand jury. E L. Hogan, 2233 Del Monte, of the Hogan-Allnoch dry goods store is chairman.

Negro Among 1st Women On Va. Grand Jury

DANVILLE, Va.—For the first time in Virginia history, a Negro woman is a member of the grand jury.

She is Miss Mildred Turner, of Martinsville, and she is a member of the grand jury for the Western District Federal Court, in session here. She is serving with five women and 12 men. One of the men is a Negro. He is John H. Bowman, of Halifax.

This is the first time women have served as either grand or trial jurors in Virginia. The 1950 General Assembly passed a law providing for voluntary jury service by women. But the Federal courts subsequently ordered women to serve on juries, but did not put such service on a voluntary basis.

Negro men have served on Federal juries in Virginia for many years. In more recent years, the practice of having Negro men on State juries has spread to all the cities. But in the rural areas, almost all juries are still all-white.